

Harford County Commission on Disabilities

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Meeting Minutes

October 27, 2008

Attendance:

Members Present:	Members Absent:	Associate Members Present
Susan Austin	Amy Axel	Joan Loftus
Niki Biggs	Reverend Ellison	Kevin Racine
Bob Coen	Councilman Guthrie	Deborah Wilcox
Helene Dubay	Steve Sopel	
Kathy Halliday		
Laurie Kwiedorowicz		
Tracy Moore		
Marc Weinstein		
Andrea Wiley		

- I. Chairperson Marc Weinstein called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.
- II. Minutes of the August 25, 2008 Commission on Disabilities meeting were approved as with correction. (There was no Commission meeting in September.)
- III. Committee Reports:
 - A. Membership:
 1. The Commission approved the Membership Committee's recommendation of Deborah Wilcox to fill the current vacancy in the category of county citizen with a disability. The recommendation will be forwarded to the County Executive and County Council for approval.
 2. The deadline for applications to fill vacancies in the categories of family member of an individual with a disability and high school student representative is November 7, 2008.



3. Susan Austin volunteered to reserve time on the agenda of the December 2, 2008 Harford County Public Schools Special Education Department Chairperson meeting to present information on the Student Representative position on the Commission and the upcoming Maryland Youth Leadership Forum. Marc Weinstein and Helene Dubay will represent the Commission at the meeting.

B. Accessibility Committee:

1. Housing: Sharon Grzanka reported that the work group met with Lou Gieszl of the Maryland Mediation and Conflict Resolution Office on October 19, 2008. Mr. Gieszl provided positive feedback on the group's plan to provide fair housing and community resource training to management and tenants/homeowners of multi-family rental and condo communities. More information to follow.
2. Accessible County Facilities: Bob Coen shared a letter from James Massey, Election Director, Harford County Board of Elections, in response to a letter from the Commission expressing concern about two inaccessible polling places in Harford County. Mr. Massey reported that the Board of Elections has taken action to ensure their accessibility for the November 4th election and that his office is exploring fully accessible locations for a long-term solution.
3. Request for Waiver of the MD Accessibility Code: Tracy Moore reported that no new requests for waiver have been received.
4. Ramps Program: Harford Habitat for Humanity has completed three ramps for homeowners with disabilities. Photos of the ramps, with the permission of the homeowners, will be posted on the Commission's web page.
5. Operation Access: Committee members met and proposed a letter to be sent to the Harford County Sheriff to discuss accessible (handicapped) parking in Harford County. More information to follow.

- C. Education Committee: Helene Dubay and Niki Biggs agreed to serve as Co-Chairs of the Education Committee. Susan Austin and Kathy Halliday, both long-term Expo Planning Committee members volunteered to assist in other activities of the committee.
- D. Government and Community Relations Committee
1. Web page:
 - Bob Coen distributed a report on search terms used by visitors to the Commission web page. Effort will be made to ensure that there is appropriate material or links to match the terms used by visitors.
 - Bob also discussed the possibility of surveying visitors to the webpage about their interests. Andrea Wiley offered to share information on the Harford County Public Library's survey of visitors to its web page. More information to follow.
 2. Legislative Committee: Laurie Kwiedorowicz reported that the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Amendments were signed into law by President Bush. Laurie added that the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) will roll-out implantation guidance by January 2009. This guidance will cover the Federal Government, which is not covered under the ADA and will place emphasis on providing reasonable accommodation rather than the strict determination of a "qualified" person with a disability.
- E. Voice of the Disability Community
1. Transportation Steering Committee: No new information. Kevin Racine discussed regional transportation issues. Kevin will be attending the Governor's Conference on Accessible Transportation to be held on October 30th.
 2. Maryland Alliance of Local Commissions on Disabilities: At the October 6, 2008 meeting, it was reported that proposed visitability legislation will require mandatory accessibility specifications for all new construction of single family homes in Maryland. More information to follow.
 3. Maryland Youth Leadership Forum (MYLF): In an effort to recruit Harford County teens to attend the 2009 MYLF,

Helene Dubay will contact Nancy Brugh, Transition Coordinator, Harford County Public Schools, and will attend the Department Chair meeting referenced in the Membership Committee report.

4. Jurisdictional Planning Group (JPG): The JPG met on October 2nd at the Bel Air Branch of the Harford County Public Library. The group held an interactive, problem-solving session on preparing an agency/organization emergency plan. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 5, 2008, at 8:30 a.m. at the Emergency Operations Center. : Rick Rowland, Senior Director of Residential Services for Gallagher Services, Catholic Charities, will discuss how to put an agency/organization emergency plan together, the process, the details, and possible changes to HR policies. Rick will lead an interactive discussion about the common sense approach to emergency planning and will share his agency's experiences during the planning process and beyond.

F. Employment Committee: Niki Biggs, committee co-chair, reported the following:

1. The Annual Awards Luncheon was held on Thursday, October 16, 2008 at noon at the Maryland Golf and Country Club. The guest speaker was Julie Hocker, who had been recognized previously by the committee. The event was very successful and well attended.
2. QUEST Internship Program: The Harford County internship program will be known as "Hire Ability". The Departments of Community Services and Human Resources will run a pilot program beginning January 2009 with three part-time interns, referred by the Division of Rehabilitation Services. The planning committee will meet again on November 21, 2008.
3. The Employment Committee was a co-sponsor of the first Disability Awareness Job Fair for persons with disabilities held at Aberdeen Proving Ground on October 23, 2008. The event was very successful and the planning group hopes to duplicate the event at an accessible venue on a bus route in 2009.

- IV. Disabilities Coordinator Report: No report.
- V. Old Business: See committee reports.
- VI. New Business:
 - A. Proposed Amendments to the Commission By-Laws: Marc Weinstein distributed amendments proposed by the Membership Committee. See attached. The amendments are presented for Commission review and discussion to be voted upon at the November 24, 2008. This procedure for introducing and amending the by-laws is prescribed in the by-laws.
 - B. Town Hall Meeting: The 11th Annual Harford County Town Hall Meeting and Health Fair will be held on Tuesday, November 18, 2008 from 4:30-7:30 p.m. at the McFaul Activities Center in Bel Air. A light supper will be served at this free event. Reservations may be made by contacting Tami Fine, Mental Health Association of Maryland, 410-235-1178, ext 201 or tfine@mhamd.org . The Commission information table will be staffed by members.
 - C. Community Development Review Board: Andrea Wiley and Laurie Kwiedorowicz will represent the Commission on the board which reviews applications for Harford County Grant-in-Aid and makes funding recommendations to the County Executive.
- VII. Public Comment and Announcements: There were none.
- VIII. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

*This document is available in alternative format upon request:
410-638-3373 voice/TTY or disability@harfordcountymd.gov .*

Proposed Amendments to the By-Laws

Introduced Monday, October 27, 2008

Current Language

ARTICLE IV

CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Section I: Quorum A quorum for the transaction of business at every meeting of the Commission on Disabilities shall consist of one-third (1/3) of the Commission members currently duly appointed which must include the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson present at such meeting.

Proposed Change

ARTICLE IV

CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Section I: Quorum A quorum for the transaction of business at every meeting the Commission on Disabilities shall consist of a simple majority (50% plus one) of the duly appointed Commission members which must include the Chairperson or Vice-Chairperson present at such meeting.

Current Language

Section IV: Regular or Special Meetings: (a) All regular or special meetings of the Commission shall be called by the Chairperson of the Commission. If the Chairperson is absent, is unable or refuses to call a meeting, the Vice-Chair has the authority to call the meeting.

(b) Notice of a regular meeting shall be given by mail or by facsimile at least 2 weeks prior to the scheduled meeting date. Notice of a special meeting shall be given by facsimile or telephone at least 48 hours prior to the meeting date.

Proposed Change

(b) Notice of a regular meeting shall be given by U.S. Mail or by electronic mail at least 2 weeks prior to the scheduled meeting date. Notice of a special meeting shall be given by electronic mail or telephone at least 48 hours prior to the meeting date.

Current Language

ARTICLE V

OFFICERS AND SUPPORT

Section VII: Annual Meeting The September meeting of the Commission shall be designated as its Annual Meeting. At that meeting the Commission's annual report shall be presented by the Chairperson for approval by at least 2/3 vote of the members of the Commission. The annual report of accomplishments for the preceding year and goals for the upcoming year shall be submitted to the County Executive and the County Council by October 30th.

Proposed Change

ARTICLE V

OFFICERS AND SUPPORT

Section VII: Annual Report An annual report of accomplishments for the preceding year and goals for the upcoming year shall be presented by the Chairperson to the Commission for approval. The approved report shall be submitted to the County Executive and the County Council by October 30th.